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October 30, 2009

Mr. Edmund Haitzuka, Chairman
Hawaii County Charter Commission
75-5706 Hanama Place #109
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740

Dear Chairman Haitzuka:

Attached is an amendment I hope to present as public testimony that I would like to have considered as a Hawai`i County Charter Amendment concerning Financial Procedures. It deals with the often perceived inequities in the distribution of funding from County revenues by providing a simple and direct solution.

This amendment requests that the Budget submitted by the Mayor allot at least 50 percent of the revenues collected in a district to be used in that district. It offers fair balance in place of inequity and prevents falling behind in local needs such as infrastructure as new areas of the County will experience growth over the next decade.

Article X, Section 10-2, Hawai`i County Charter, regarding Financial Procedures is amended to read as follows with added language underscored:

Adding (a)(1)(A)

The budget shall be configured so that at least 50 percent of all yearly non-exempt revenues collected in a district based on the original Moku boundaries of ancient Hawai`i (Puna, Hilo, Hamakua, Kohala, Kona, Ka`u), including those collected and returned in any proportion by the state, shall be budgeted and spent for items in that district. The Moku boundaries are not impacted by redistricting.

Adding (a)(1)(B)

Exempt revenues are those designated and collected for special dedicated purposes for which special areas or concepts have, are, or will be in effect such as Business Improvement Districts or Special Tax districts, and those collected for special funds such as safe houses, homeless shelters, or land funds. Bond funding allotments are also considered exempt. Any expenditure considered to benefit the County as a whole, such as circum-island transportation, is regarded as exempt and not configured into determining the 50 percent allocation.

Sincerely,
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